



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**\$327 Million Available for Distance Learning & Telemedicine**

**Lincoln, Neb., March 19**—The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service is accepting applications for distance learning and telemedicine projects serving rural America. Available for fiscal year 2002 are \$200 million for loans, \$17 million in grants and \$110 million of loan/grant combinations.

The maximum amount of a grant application is \$500,000 and for loans \$10 million. The Rural Utilities Service may fund a project greater than \$10 million subject to the project's feasibility and the availability of loan funds.

Qualified rural schools, libraries, hospitals, health care clinics, and related organizations are eligible to apply for the funds offered through USDA Rural Development's Distance Learning and Telemedicine program.

With distance learning, students in isolated rural schools can participate in virtual field trips or take college preparatory and foreign language classes. Telemedicine projects enable rural patients to be examined by doctors in distant locations, bringing better health care service to remote communities and saving time, money and even lives.

Applications for grants must be postmarked no later than May 13, 2002. Applications for fiscal year 2002 loans or combination loans and grants may be submitted at any time up to August 31, 2002, and will be processed on a first-come, first serve basis. Applications are to be submitted to the Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 1550, Washington, DC 20250-1550. Applications should be marked Attention: Director, Advanced Services Division, Telecommunications Program.

For further information contact Marilyn J. Morgan, Branch Chief, Distance Learning and Telemedicine Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service (RUS), STOP 1550, Room 2838, South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-1550. Telephone: (202) 720-0413, FAX: (202) 720-1051. Further details, along with regulations and application guide, are available on the web at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/dlt/dltpublications.htm>. Application guides may also be requested from RUS by contacting the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Branch, USDA-RUS, Phone: (202) 720-0413.

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USDA Rural Development is an Equal Opportunity Lender, Provider and Employer. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to USDA, Director, OCR, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.